

## ALERT 2021 - Equality Impact Assessment

Question	Response
1. Name of policy/funding activity/event being assessed	UKRI-BBSRC Mid-Range Equipment Funding ALERT 2021
2. Summary of aims and objectives of the policy/funding activity/event	<p>UKRI-BBSRC are awarding significant capital investment into the research equipment and capability through the investment in equipment and technologies. This funding call is aimed at researchers and eligible institutions.</p> <p>The process involves a multidisciplinary panel-only peer review and assessment, which will lead to the awarding of funding to successful applicants and institutions.</p>
1. What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this policy? (e.g. with relevant groups and stakeholders)	ALERT 2021 is directly linked to ALERT calls that have been held in previous years. Consultation with members of UKRI-BBSRC Equality and Inclusion Policy Group on barriers to inclusion, participation and potential bias in the decision making process. Consultation with the UKRI-BBSRC events management team will occur as there is potential for a “hybrid” panel meeting allowing both physical participation and virtual participation.
2. Who is affected by the policy/funding activity/event?	UKRI-BBSRC's eligible Research Community All external panel members and UKRI-BBSRC staff taking part in the assessment process.
3. What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the actual impact of the policy/funding activity/event?	<p>There will be monitoring to avoid conditions that may introduce bias into the process and create barriers to participation.</p> <p>There will also be a post-review wash up, where additional reviewing can take place if necessary.</p>

Protected Characteristic Group	Is there a potential for positive or negative impact?	Please explain and give examples of any evidence/data used	Action to address negative impact (e.g. adjustment to the policy)
Disability	Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neurological disabilities: participants might experience concentration difficulties</li> <li>Physical disabilities: participants might have difficulties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Call documents will also be available as a word document and should be suited for users who have accessibility modifications to their computing systems.</li> <li>Ask participants if they have any requirements in order to be able to participate in</li> </ul>

		<p>accessing venues or might need assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carers/participants with caring duties might find it difficult to attend full day meetings if these extend the working day.</li> <li>• Online resources may be difficult for visually or physically disabled to complete.</li> </ul>	<p>meetings. These requirements will vary depending on whether a physical or virtual meeting is held.</p> <p><u>Physical Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the agenda leaves acceptable break times and ensure they are taken.</li> <li>• Make sure venues have good transport links for national and international travel.</li> <li>• Try to book venues with daylight lighting</li> <li>• Make sure the agenda leaves acceptable travel times for participants and carers</li> <li>• Make sure that additional caring costs caused by this meeting will be paid for and that participants are aware of this.</li> </ul> <p><u>Virtual Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the agenda leaves acceptable break times and ensure they are taken. If a virtual meeting is held, additional breaks will need to be included to reduce the effects of cognitive strain.</li> <li>• Holding a virtual meeting will help to mitigate some of the negative impacts associated with travel, venue requirements and caring costs as participants will not need to travel to the venue.</li> </ul>
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	Neutral	n/a	n/a
<b>Marriage or civil partnership</b>	Neutral	Neutral	n/a
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maternity/paternity leave or childcare commitments may result in individuals meetings</li> <li>• Pregnancy: attendees might find it more difficult</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure that meeting start and finish times do not make the meeting an unacceptable duration.</li> <li>• Arrange adequate breaks in the agenda and ensure these are taken. Plan additional breaks if the meeting is virtual</li> </ul>

		to attend a full day meeting	<p>to help prevent cognitive strain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask for any reasonable adjustments to enable participation</li> <li>• Ensure participants are aware that an additional childcare costs that are incurred as a result of this meeting will be paid for</li> </ul> <p><u>Physical Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that venue has good and convenient transport links for national and international travel.</li> </ul> <p><u>Virtual Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will help to reduce childcare requirements as the parent will not have to travel for the meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Race</b>	Neutral	n/a	n/a
<b>Religion or belief</b>	Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious activities/holidays</li> <li>• Dietary requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of calendar of religious observances and avoid clashes with planned events and deadlines</li> <li>• Ask participants for dietary requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	Neutral	n/a	n/a
<b>Sex (gender)</b>	Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic bias in science area towards male researchers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be aware of the potential gender bias when inviting panel members, taking steps to achieve balanced representation.</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	Neutral	n/a	n/a

#### Evaluation:

Question	Explanation / justification
Is it possible the proposed policy or activity or change in policy or activity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?	<p>The following aspects need to be taken into consideration regarding equality and inclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensuring that submission process is accessible to all</li> <li>2. Ensuring that the submission, peer review and awarding processes are free from unintentional bias</li> <li>3. Ensuring that the process enables rigorous assessment of the investment</li> </ol>

	<p>4. Identifying and addressing any potential barriers to attendance and participation by a diverse range of people</p> <p>Steps taken to address these issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the submission process is easy and accessible, providing documentation in different formats,</li> <li>• Ensuring that panel membership is as diverse as possible and is representative of industry, academia and research institutes and institutional and regional representation.</li> <li>• Ensuring that gender balance is sought in regards to panel membership</li> <li>• Raising awareness of the potential for unconscious bias to impact on the decision making. For example, all panel members now receive information on safeguarding decision making and unconscious bias prior to meeting.</li> <li>• Ensuring that the format, duration and location of the assessment panel meeting are conducive to participation by a diverse range of people</li> <li>• Ensuring that timetables and time allocation of pre-meeting tasks are sensitive to possible caring responsibilities (school holidays etc)</li> </ul> <p>In addition to the above, steps have been taken to minimise the potential impact of unconscious bias on the review. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unconscious bias briefing included in the Chair's brief and panel briefing.</li> <li>• Briefing on unconscious bias provided to panel members, with documentation added to Extranet to be available for further review.</li> <li>• Multiple points of reflection and analysis within the review process.</li> </ul>	
<b>Final Decision:</b>	<b>Tick the relevant box</b>	<b>Include any explanation / justification required</b>
1. No barriers identified, therefore activity will <b>proceed</b> .	x	
2. You can decide to <b>stop</b> the policy or practice at some point because the data shows bias towards one or more groups		
3. You can <b>adapt or change</b> the policy in a way which you think will eliminate the bias		

<p>4. Barriers and impact identified, however having considered all available options carefully, there appear to be no other proportionate ways to achieve the aim of the policy or practice (e.g. in extreme cases or where positive action is taken). Therefore you are going to <b>proceed with caution</b> with this policy or practice knowing that it may favour some people less than others, providing justification for this decision.</p>		
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<p><b>Will this EIA be published* Yes/Not required</b>  (*EIA's should be published alongside relevant funding activities e.g. calls and events:</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
<p><b>Date completed:</b></p>	<p><b>05-October-2021</b></p>
<p><b>Review date</b> (if applicable):</p>	<p><b>Annually</b></p>